

Message Text

SECRET

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S E C R E T PARIS 01930

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, FR, XF
SUBJ: THE MIDDLE EAST AT EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING

1. DURING A JANUARY 19 MEETING WITH ELYSEE DIRECTOR GENERAL FRANCOIS-PONCET, THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT WE UNDERSTOOD FRANCE HAD OPPOSED AN EC DECLARATION RESPONDING TO A LETTER FROM SADAT ASKING SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIAN RIGHT TO SELF DETERMINATION. FRANCOIS-PONCET SEEMED SOMEWHAT SURPRISED TO HEAR THIS. HE SAID THAT THE POSITION OF THE ELYSEE WAS THAT FRANCE SHOULD NOT TAKE THE INITIATIVE BUT THAT IT WOULD SUPPORT A FURTHER EC DECLARATION ON THE QUESTION. HE ALLOWED THAT PERHAPS ELYSEE THINKING HAD NOT GOTTEN DOWN THE BUREAUCRATIC LADDER TO THE QUAI.

2. A CONVERSATION AT THE QUAI AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME SEEMS TO CONFIRM FRANCOIS-PONCET'S SUSPICIONS OF BAD
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COMMUNICATIONS. ACTING DIRECTOR OF NORTH AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EAST AFFAIRS, HENRI SERVANT, (WHO WAS THE FRENCH MIDDLE EAST EXPERT AT THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING) TOLD US THAT THE GERMANS HAD PROPOSED A FURTHER EC DECLARATION PRAISING SADAT'S PEACE EFFORTS. THE FRENCH DELEGATION HAD TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THE EC HAD MADE A STATEMENT AS RECENTLY AS NOVEMBER 22 AND ANOTHER

STATEMENT NOW WOULD ONLY WEAKEN THE CREDIBILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF EC STATEMENTS ON VARIOUS ISSUES. BESIDES, SERVANT ADDED, THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT PAY ANY ATTENTION TO ANYTHING THE EC NINE SAYS ON THE ISSUE AND THE FACT OF SUPPORT WOULD ONLY HAVE INJECTED ANOTHER ELEMENT OF ACERBITY INTO FRENCH-ISRAELI RELATIONS. NO REAL DECISION WAS TAKEN (THE MATTER WAS DISCUSSED AT A RESTRICTED LUNCH NOT DURING A PLENARY) BUT EACH COUNTRY WAS LEFT TO CONSIDER ITSELF FREE TO RESPOND TO SADAT'S LETTER AS IT SAW FIT. A WORKING GROUP HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH COMING UP WITH A NEW DRAFT DECLARATION WHICH THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS WILL CONSIDER AT A LATER TIME.

3. FURTHER TO THE STATE OF FRENCH-ISRAELI RELATIONS, FRANCOIS-PONCET TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE GOF WAS VERY MUCH ANNOYED BY BEGIN'S LIVE INTERVIEW ON FRANCE INTER RADIO JANUARY 11 IN WHICH HE HAD BEEN CRITICAL OF FRENCH POLICIES TO THE EXTENT THAT IT BORDERED ON MEDDLING IN FRENCH INTERNAL AFFAIRS.
HARTMAN

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